

## **Moran Testifies about Japanese Embargo of American Beef at Ways and Means Committee Hearing**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today testified before the House Committee on Ways and Means about the economic harm that U.S. farmers, ranchers, processors and retailers have experienced because of the Japanese embargo on American beef. The hearing focused on a number of unfair Japanese trading practices. Moran was the sole Member of Congress to testify before the committee and highlighted the importance of beef exports.

"Losing our annual \$1.7 billion export market to Japan is having a large negative impact on our entire beef industry, and it also puts our well-established bilateral trade relationship at risk," Moran testified. "Whether you are a farmer or rancher, a beef processor or retailer, the loss of this market is having a detrimental effect on rural communities and our agriculture economy."

Japan has prohibited beef imports from the U.S. since December 2003, when a single case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) was found in a Canadian-born dairy cow. Since that time, there have only been two cases of BSE in this country compared to 20 BSE cases in Japan. The U.S. has undertaken a rigorous and thorough surveillance program for BSE testing since the first case was discovered and has implemented extensive safeguards to protect human and animal health.

In March, Moran introduced a resolution calling for sanctions to be used immediately against Japan if it fails to abide by its October 2004 agreement to reopen its border. The hearing today was a necessary step to bring this resolution to the House floor and show Japan the serious nature of this trade issue. This week, Moran also led an effort of more than 100 Members of Congress calling on President Bush to make restoring Japanese market access for U.S. beef his highest economic priority with Japan.

"Despite our government's efforts, the Japanese continue to unjustifiably delay the process of resuming trade, basing their decisions on factors not grounded in science or consumer safety," Moran said. "While I do not wish for the U.S. and Japan to enter into a drawn out trade dispute, the reality is Japan must uphold its trade agreements. The U.S. can't be satisfied with the status quo. It is no longer time for a carrot. It's stick time."

Moran is a senior member of the House Agriculture Committee.

###